



IMAGERY SOURCES IN THE POETICS OF ANDREAS GRYPHIUSⁱ

FONTES IMAGÉTICAS NA POÉTICA DE ANDREAS GRYPHIUS

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ABSTRACT – We intend to reflect on the use of imagery elements and their sources in the German 17th century and demonstrate that Baroque literature does not have to be understood as a poetic of personal experiences in the contemporary sense. Andreas Gryphius, as the artist inserted in the social context of the German Baroque, was immersed in a sea of images and topics, making great use of these in his poetic work. For that, he used as an inspired source not only the *auctoritas* but also some books of emblems that circulated in Europe in the 17th century, like the Bible, since the period was also impregnated with sacred elements.

KEYWORDS – Andreas Gryphius, Baroque, emblematic genre, image

RESUMO - Pretendemos refletir sobre a utilização de elementos imagéticos e suas fontes no século XVII alemão e demonstrar que a literatura barroca não precisa ser entendida como uma poética de experiências pessoais no sentido contemporâneo. Andreas Gryphius, como artista inserido no contexto social do barroco alemão, mergulhou num mar de imagens e temas, fazendo grande uso deles em sua obra poética. Para tanto, utilizou como fonte inspirada não apenas os *auctoritas* e os livros de emblemas que circularam na Europa no século XVII, como também a Bíblia, já que o período também estava impregnado de elementos sagrados.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE – Andreas Gryphius, Barroco, gênero emblemático, imagem

Gryphius and incipient German literature

Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664), one of the greatest authors of German Baroque, was born in Glogau, in Silesia (today Poland), a region

not far from Bohemia, the epicenter of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), where he came from most of the essential German-speaking poets of the 17th century: Martin Opitz, Angelus



Silesius (Johannes Scheffler), Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau, Friedrich von Logau.

However, to understand Gryphius' work, it is first necessary to understand the particularities of 17th-century German literature based on two fundamental aspects of that society: its political and religious structure. Politically, there was no German nation, as it was divided into more than three hundred semi-autonomous states, each of them governed by a prince, bishop, or count, despite the apparent unity transmitted by the Holy Roman Empire, whose emperor was elected by the most powerful princes – the Electors; from a religious point of view, the region was the cradle of the Reformation, which would change the destiny of the Catholic Church and Europe, causing a series of conflicts and wars.

From Martin Opitz onwards, some German writers wanted to establish a *Renaissance* in Germany along the lines of what had occurred in other European literature, albeit a century late. The *Sprachgesellschaften*¹ were founded, whose objective would be to **purify** the German language and encourage translations and the creation of literary works along the lines of Antiquity and the Renaissance.

¹ *Sprachgesellschaften*: a term coined in the 19th century to designate academies of linguistics whose objectives were the study and promotion of language and literature itself to insert them within the European literary context. In this way, they used translations of the main works of literature in a foreign language into German, in addition, they sought to keep the German language away from the influence of foreign languages. Initially, these academies only allowed the presence of nobles, but this gradually

The great masters Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso were presented, translated, and imitated as models of literary art; the writers of the French Pleiades, such as Ronsard; Daniel Heinsius and Hugo Crocius from the Netherlands; the English Petrarchans; verifying the strange phenomenon that this century, characteristically nationalist, allowed a hitherto unprecedented penetration of the foreign spirit. (BOESCH, 1967, p. 160)

However, it was within a disturbed and conflictive context in the 17th century that German literature was preparing to enter the world of the European Renaissance, albeit late. In other European nations, much has been said about the causes of this delay of almost a century. Perhaps we could understand this, remembering that the Reformation so absorbed the German spirit in the previous century that there was barely any interest, strength, or tranquility left to flower the artistic renaissance. (BOESCH, 1967, p. 161) However, such a Renaissance was nothing more than an attempt since German poets and playwrights of the period were surrounded by baroque tendencies in many regions of Europe. The world and literature were not oblivious to the sociocultural and religious transformations of the moment. Thus, no matter how much they

changed, and they began to accept bourgeois scholars and literati. The best-known *Sprachgesellschaften* were: a) *Die Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*, founded in 1617, which had among its members: Opitz, Birken, Gryphius, Logau, Hardörfer; b) *Die Deutschgesinnte Genossenschaft* founded in 1643 by Philipp Von Zesen; c) *Der Elbschwänenorden* founded in 1660 by Johann Rist; d) *Pegnesische Blumenorden*.



tried to follow their predecessors, imitating them, they failed, as they were already inserted in another social context, different from the previous one.

This is precisely why later German literary schools harshly criticized the 17th century. Grimmelshausen, for example, was considered, for a long time, the only credible literary expression of the period, as the **others** were nothing more than Marinists and writers of artificial tragedies – which weren't even tragedies, according to Aristotle's mold – with their gongoric language, and unnatural. In short, the author of *Simplizissimus* is the one who would have saved the 17th century from total literary failure. Such critics did not see that the desire for classicism was the only characteristic feature of the German Renaissance, which the Baroque surpassed. Thus, "each attempt to get closer to the old form exposed the work [...] to a highly baroque restructuring". (BENJAMIN, 1984, p. 83)

About tragedy, according to Aristotelian precepts, Benjamin tells us that the German 17th century was the period in which Aristotle had a minor influence, as this was sought in Dutch classicism and Jesuit theater (BENJAMIN, 1984, p. 84), adding what

It is almost unbelievable that it was said that Baroque drama is a true tragedy because it evokes the feelings of pity and terror that Aristotle considered typical of tragedy – without taking into account that Aristotle never said that only tragedy could evoke these emotions. (BENJAMIN, 1984, p. 74)

Without letting ourselves be carried away by German criticism from the 18th and 19th centuries, contrary to its baroque expression, we must take into account, at least, the role played by those authors not only in the construction of the German literary language – it was Martin Opitz who established the rules of poetics German in his *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey*, from 1624 –, as well as in the creation of the German Language itself – whose milestone we could say was the translation of the **Bible** by Luther.

Thus, in the period, the national language was appreciated and used as a literary expression since the language used in many German courts was French, and the poetic language was Latin. It should not be forgotten that in Italy, there was already a Petrarch and a Dante Alighieri; in Spain, a Cervantes; a Ronsard, in France; and in Portugal, Camões had already published **The Lusíads** (*Os Lusíadas*). Thus, that pioneering group should have at least the merit of building the modern German literary language, initiated by Martin Luther with his translation of the **Bible**. That is significant, especially if we think that Gryphius' first works were also written in the language of Virgil (*Herodis Furiae et Rachelis lacrymae*, from 1634; *Dei Vindictis Impetus et Herodis Interitus*, from 1635; *Parnassus renovatus*, from 1636), when the same was still at the *Gymnasium* in Fraustadt.



Imagery sources

We intend to present and reflect on the use of imagery elements and their sources in the German 17th century and demonstrate that the literature known as baroque should not be understood as a poetics of personal experiences in the contemporary sense. While the latter is based on originality and individual creativity, the themes and concepts are already pre-established, especially in ancient philosophy and rhetoric. (BRANDÃO, 2009)

Literature is, in this way, a rhetorically coded representation when an “individual lyrical self” gives space to a “collective”, following current social precepts. There is, therefore, no plagiarism or appeal to originality since all the precepts are already determined in the *auctores*’ rhetorical source, with the poet being responsible for emulation. (BRANDÃO, 2009, p. 308)

When approaching a particular poet of the period based on his biographical data, such as the German Andreas Gryphius, we might be led to think that imagery in his work comes from his personal experiences – such as the Thirty Years’ War – or even *desengaño* dominant in the period. We must remember, however, that the poet made more use of the commonplaces and topics of the period and *auctores* than, exactly, of his misfortunes.

Andreas Gryphius, like artists inserted in the social context of the 17th century, has been immersed in a sea of images and topics, making extensive use of them in his work. To achieve this, it was used as an inspirational source for

the *auctores* and the various books of emblems that circulated throughout Europe in the 17th century, and for the **Bible** itself – as the period was also imbued with the sacred element. (BRANDÃO, 2010)

We will seek to exemplify some imagery sources that Gryphius used in his lyrics that will support us. To do this, we will use the topics used by the author and his rhetorical, patristic, or biblical sources. The intention here is not to conduct an exhaustive survey of texts and examples but to demonstrate that part of the imagery source familiar to the author in question was part of a common source from which most authors of 17th-century art drew their supplies.

Vanitas (vanity)

Vanity of vanities, says Ecclesiastes, vanity of vanities! Everything is vanity. (Ecl 1,2)

One of the most used words/concepts in the 17th century was that which refers to the biblical text from the book of Ecclesiastes. It doesn’t matter what social position you are in – whether noble, cleric, bourgeois, ordinary people – your level of culture – educated, cultured, doctor, mediocre, or even illiterate like the vast majority – or even your religious orientation – whether Catholic or Protestant –, after all, everyone allowed themselves to be influenced not only by the word *vanitas* but also by everything that was represented based on this concept: regardless of whether the chosen medium was pictorial, sculptural or poetic.



Vanitas ceases to be a mere word and becomes a genre in which the artistic expressions of the 17th century were inserted. Furthermore, it demonstrated human being's conflicting relationship based on the awareness of his ephemerality, his brevity, in short, the understanding of his mortality, whose driving principle was the *λόγος*, after through it we were aware of our finitude *and* with it the anguish of our non-perpetuity.

Artistically, we see *vanitas* in the still lifes to which other images were added – if not replaced – fully decoded by 17th-century people, such as the entire skeleton, the skull, the overturned chalice, the extinguished candle, the soap bubbles, the hourglass, among others. In literature, we had temporal antitheses that also convey impermanence, or even the same images given previously that were also inserted into the poetics of the period.

For a contemporary reader of Gryphius, the influence of the Thirty Years' War on his poetics would be evident. However, this will be a mere motto to express the vision of *vanitas* since this theme is recurrent in other poets of the period who did not even witness it directly, as Quevedo:

It was a dream yesterday; tomorrow, it will
[be soil:
A little before nothing; and a little later
[smoke
And destiny ambitions and, I presume,

² *Fué sueño ayer, mañana será tierra:/ Poco antes nada, y poco después humo/ Y destino ambiciones y presumo,/ Apenas junto al cerco que me cierra.(...)/Miré los muros de la patria mía,/ Si un*

Barely next to the fence that closes me.
[...]
I looked at the walls of my homeland,
If a once strong, already crumbling,
From the race of age tired,
For those whose courage is already expiring.
(QUEVEDO, 1975, p. 37, free translation)²

We find several examples of *vanitas* in the lyrical work of Gryphius:

*Ein bald verschmeltzer Schnee/ und abgebrannte
[Kerzen.
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 9)*

[A snow soon melted/ and candles burned.]

*Solt denn die Wasserblaß/ der leichte Mensch
[bestehn.
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v.1, p. 8)*

[After all, the weak man must be like the water bubble.]

*Der jtzet so pocht vnd trotzt/ läst vbrig Asch vnd
[Bein
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v.1, p. 11)*

[That now throbs and persists/ then dust and bones will remain]

*Über eine Sand-Uhr
Der Sand der deine Zeit kan in dem Glaß
[abtheilen/
Weist uns/ wie wir der Grufft/ der Hand voll
[Sand zueilen
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 206)*

tiempo fuertes, ya desmoronados,/ De la carrera de la edad cansados,/ Por quien caduca ya su valentía.



[Over an hourglass/ The sand in the glass
your time can divide/ shows us that we are
approaching the grave, the hand of sand]

Licht (light)

Gryphius will use *Sonne* (sun), *Licht* (light), *erleuchten* (to lighten), and *hell* (transparent), among other words that indicate luminosity and clarity, as attributes of the divinity that will seek to illuminate the human being in search of his eternal salvation.

[...] *O dreymal höchste Macht
Erleuchte den/ der sich itzt beugt vor deinen Füßen!*
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v.1, p. 65)

[O thrice most high power! Enlighten the
one who prays at your feet.]

*Kom licht! und scheine dem, den Nacht und grawen
[deckt.*
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v.1, p. 187)

[Come light and shine on him, covered by
night and the pit.]

*Daß ich dich/ mein Sonn/ Mein Licht mög ewig
[schauen.*
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 65)

[May I see you, my sun, my light, forever.]

*O Glantz der Herlikeit, der die sebr lange Nacht/
Und alte finsternüß auff diesen Tag volendet!*
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 191)

[O radiance of majesty completes the too-
long night and the ancient darkness on this
day.]

Gryphius, when using these images, uses vast material provided by the Bible, both from the Old and New Testaments, in which light is the clear and living sign of divinity or its intervention, as demonstrated by the examples:

Yahweh, you yourself are my lamp, my God
lights up my darkness (Ps 18,28)

The people that walked in darkness have seen a
great light; on the inhabitants of a country in
shadow dark as death light has blazed forth. (Is
9,1)

What has come into being in him was life, life
that was the light of men; and light shines in
darkness, and darkness could not overpower it.

[...] The Word was the real light that gives light
to everyone; he was coming into the world. (Jo
1,4-6 and 9)

In addition to the biblical tradition, the sun
was used by Horapolo (2011) in his work
Hieroglyphica, one of the sources of 16th-
century emblems widely used by 17th-century
poets and painters:

To indicate “eternity,” they write a sun and a
moon because they are eternal elements. [...] This
identification of the sun with eternity should not
be surprising because Plato already associates it
with the image of God.



(HORAPOLO, 2011, p. 43, free translation)³

Cesare Ripa (2007), in his **Iconology**, tells us this:

A woman who appears sitting on a celestial sphere. With her right hand, she holds a Sun, along with its rays, and with her left hand, the Moon; this demonstrates [...] that the Sun and the Moon are perpetual begetters of things, which, by their virtue, generate, they preserve and nourish all the lower bodies [...]. (RIPA, 2007, v.1, p. 393, free translation)⁴

Finsternis (darkness)

Darkness, *Finsternis*, and its correlates *Dunkel* (dark), *Nacht* (night), and *Schwarz* (black) demonstrate that people prefer to remain without the grace of God; they do not want light but darkness. However, man will be “persecuted” by the light since “darkness could not overpower it” (Jo 1,5). Gryphius will also use *Finsternis* as a synonym for evil for the Prince of Darkness:

Der Furst der funsternus, mitt weh', ach, angst
[undt leidt!
Schaw wie mich hatt umbhült die nacht der
[traurikeit
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 189)

[The prince of darkness, in pain, woe, fear, and suffering! See how the night of sadness envelops me.]

Vertreit die dicke Nacht die meine Seel umbgibt
Die Schmerzen Finsterniß die Hertzen und Geist
[betriibt
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 65)

[Amazing thick night that surrounds my soul; the darkness of pain that afflicts heart and spirit.]

Finsternis and *Nacht* can contain other meanings, such as fear or the absence of divinity.

Korn (grain/seed)

The seed represents the word of God that is sown to find favorable soil to develop and grow. This soil is the human heart, which may or may not allow itself to be heard by it; if it is allowed, it will bear much fruit; if not, it will be alone and sterile.

Kein körnlein ist so Klein/ als Senff vor uns zu
[schätzen
Doch/ wenn es in die Scho ßder feuschten Erden fällt
So wurtzelt eilend ein und keinet in die Welt
Vnd wird ein hoher Baum/ de rund umb allen
[Plätzen
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 195)

[No seed is as tiny and valued by us as mustard, but when it falls into the womb of

³ Para indicar “eternidad” escriben un **sol** y una luna porque son elementos eternos. (...) Esta identificación del **sol** con la eternidad en absoluto debe extrañar, porque ya Platón lo asocia con la imagen de Dios.

⁴ Mujer que aparece sentada sobre una esfera celeste. Con la diestra sostiene un Sol, junto con sus rayos, y con la siniestra la Luna, con ello se demuestra (...) que el **Sol** y la Luna son perpetuos engendadores de las cosas, los cuales, por su propia virtud, generan, conservan y dan alimento a todos los cuerpos inferiores (...).



the damp earth, it quickly takes root and sprouts into the world, becoming a tall tree.]

Gryphius takes from Matthew the comparison between the seed and the word of God:

The kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown, it is the biggest of shrubs and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air can come and shelter in its branches. (Mt 13,31-32)

However, there is still in Matthew the word of the sower:

He said, 'Listen, a sower went out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up at once, because there was no depth of earth [...]. (Mt 13, 3-5)

Gryphius now uses the gospel of Saint John, citing the seed of wheat:

*Wenn nicht das Weitzen-Korn/ ins Grab der Erden
[fällt/
Und sich den schnellen Zahn der Fäule läst
[verzehren
So kan es keine Blüt/ auch keine Frucht gewehren
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 236)*

[If the grain of wheat does not fall into the grave of the earth and allows itself to be consumed by the quick tooth of rot, it will also not be able to bear fruit or flowers.]

The text of Saint John: “In all truth I tell you, unless a wheat grain falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest.” (Jo 12, 24), together with that of Saint Matthew, which deals with the same theme, will even serve as the motto for Father Antônio Vieira (2014) to write his “Sermon of the Sixtieth”:

The wheat that the evangelical preacher sowed says Christ, the word of God. The thorns, the path, and the excellent ground into which the grain fell are the diverse hearts of men [...]. Finally, the good land is good hearts or good-hearted men, and in these, the divine word holds and bears fruit, with such fecundity and abundance that it is harvested one hundred by one: “*Et fructum fecit centuplum.*” (VIEIRA, 2014, p. 32, free translation)⁵

With these words, Saint John shows what Jesus’ destiny will be: death, as it is through death that the Redeemer will give his life for humanity. However, the Messiah urges his disciples to do the same but to do so, they need to deny their lives – of pleasures, of lust, of hypocrisy – to achieve whole life, eternal life:

Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it

⁵ O trigo que semeou o pregador evangélico, diz Cristo que é a palavra de Deus. Os espinhos, o caminho e a terra boa em que o trigo caiu, são os diversos corações dos homens (...). Finalmente, a terra boa são os corações bons ou os homens de bom coração; e nestes

prende e frutifica a palavra divina, com tanta fecundidade e abundância, que se colhe cento por um: ‘*Et fructum fecit centuplum.*’



for eternal life. Whoever serves me, must follow me, and my servant will be with me wherever I am. (Jo 12, 25-26)

Gryphius continues in his sonnet, showing us the result of fidelity to the calling/following of Christ because despite *Schmach* [humiliation], *Angst* [fear], and *Todt* [death], we will be in the *Freundenreiche* [the Kingdom of Happiness]:

*Wer Christo treulich folgt/ wer durch Schmach/
[Angst/ uñ Streiche/
Und Todt ihm ähnlich wird/ sol' in dem
[Freundenreiche
In Ehren/ Lust und Wonn' ihm ewig gleiche seyn.*
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 236)

[Whoever faithfully follows Christ through humiliation, fear, and reverses, and death becomes similar to him and must be eternally equal in honor, pleasure, and happiness.

Rose (rose), **Blume** (flower)

The rose will be one of the recurring themes in the poetics of the 17th century; Gryphius will also use it since it appears beautiful at dawn and fades away at night, thus demonstrating the conception of *vanitas*. Below is an example taken from Trauerspiel **Catharina von Georgien**:

[...] *die edlen Rosen leben/ so kurtze Zeit/ und sind
[mit Dornen doch umgeben./
Als bald die Sonn' entsteht/ schmückt sie der Gärte
[Zelt;/
Vnd wird in nichts verkebrt so bald die Sonne felt.*

[The noble roses live briefly and are surrounded by thorns. As soon as the sun

rises, they decorate the garden and turn it into nothing as soon as it sets.]

We also have an example taken from the Gryphius' Odes:

*Wie eine Rose blübet
Wen man die Sonne sibet
Begrüßten diese Welt:
Die ebr der Tag sich neiget
Ebr sich der abend zeigt
Verwelcket/ und unversehens abfällt.*
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 19)

[As a rose blooms, when it sees the sun greet this world, and before the day is over before the night shows itself, it withers and falls suddenly.]

This theme is also widely explored in the Bible:

All humanity is grass and all its beauty like the wild flower. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of Yahweh blows on them. (The grass is surely the people.) The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God remains forever. (Is 40,6-8)

Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin, yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his royal robes was clothed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the wildflowers growing in the field which are there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will he not much more look after you, you who have so little faith? (Mt 6, 28-30)

Next to the rose, there are thorns (*Dornen*) that surround it:



*Kein Stand/ kein Ort/ kein Mensch/ ist seines
[Creutztes frey/
Wo schöne Rosen Blühn/ stehn scharffe Dorn
[darbey.
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 8)*

[No class, no place, no man is free from his cross. Where beautiful roses bloom, there are sharp thorns.]

*Mit Thränen grüssen wir
In Thränen lebt man bir:
Mit Thränen gibt man gute Nacht!
Was ist der Erden Saal?
Ein herber Thränen-Thal!*

*Wie Rosen die wir zühn
Auff Dörnern nur verblühn.
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 35-36)*

[We greet you with tears and in tears if you live here: with tears, you say good night! What is the Earth Hall? A bitter valley of tears, just like the roses we cultivate: they only bloom on thorns.]

Ambrose (4th century AD) said the rose surrounded by thorns represented the human condition after man's expulsion from paradise; it would mean *Welt Wollust* (worldly pleasure). (JÖNS, 1966, p. 120) This is the name of the sonnet whose verses (*Kein Stand...*) were transcribed above: *Der Welt Wollust ist nimer ohne Schmerzen [Worldly pleasure is never without pain]*.

Ambrose appealed to Genesis:

⁶ Tiene los ojos vueltos hacia el Cielo y vierte copiosas lágrimas, llevando em la cabeza una corona de punzantes espinas. Sostiene con la izquierda un corazón, coronado de espinas igualmente (...) Tiene además dos coronas de espinas (...) [y] representa la culpa

It will yield you brambles and thistles as you eat the produce of the land. By the sweat of your face, will you earn your food until you return to the ground, as you were taken from it. For dust you are, and to dust you shall return. (Gen 3, 18-19)

For Picinelli, in his Emblem 177, rose and thorn would mean *Vita humana*, and in Emblem 214, *Felicitas mundana* (JÖNS, 1966, p. 121); Ripa (2007), for her part, shows us the thorns to portray compunction:

Her eyes are turned towards Heaven, and she sheds copious tears, wearing a crown of sharp thorns on his head. She holds with her left a heart, also crowned with thorns [...] It also has two crowns of thorns [...] [and], representing the guilt incurred by sin; guilt that incessantly stings and stings the conscience, symbolized by the crown he wears on her head. (RIPA, 2007, v. 1, p. 205-206, free translation)⁶

Gryphius also compares the rose with Christ, precisely as if it were his scepter, that is, his authority:

*[...] er wird der Armen Recht/
Der müden tröster seyn/ er wird was kerum' ist
[schlecht/
Was dunckel offenbar/ was langsam eilends
[schlichten/
Er ist den Rosen gleich/ sein Scepter stärcket und
[bricht/
Gleich wie ein Rosen-Zweig wol reucht/ und*

contraída por el pecado; culpa que sin cesar punza y remuerde la conciencia, quedando simbolizada por la corona que en la cabeza lleva.



[*heftig sticht.*

(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 238-239)

[(...) he will be the comforter of the rights of the poor and the weary; he will improve what is crooked and evil; it will make it clear that it is dark; what is slow will be hurried. He is like roses: His scepter strengthens and breaks, just as a rose branch is fragrant and intensely hurts.]

Christ is seen here as an impartial, merciful, and just sovereign, hence the correspondence made with the rose, which exudes a refreshing perfume but has thorns that can hurt. In Emblem 211, Picinelli had expressed the motto of an emblem about roses: *Pungit & recreat*; when referring to the nature of God, this characteristic of the rose meant *Justitia & Misericordia*. (JÖNS, 1966)

Schatten (shadows)

In Christian allegory, shadows represent the Old Testament, and this meaning can be from two points of view: being just a dark image or darkness that disappears as soon as the light approaches. (JÖNS, 1966)

In the first case, it represents the time when the Law was in expectation of the divine revelation of salvation; in the second, it is an analogy between the Law, the announcement of the Redeemer, and the Gospel, the reality of his arrival. Both perspectives will be present in Gryphius' work:

Der Schatten nimt ein End

Die alte Prophecey wird durch diss Kind erfüllet.

(JÖNS, 1966, p. 191)

[The shadow ends; the old prophecy comes true through this child.]

Der Bund ist Neu' und erbellet/

Was im Alte vorgestellt:

Dort sind Schatten: Hir steht klar/

Was dort nur abgebildet war.

(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 105)

[The covenant is new and clarifies what the old one presented. There are shadows there: here, it is clear what was only represented there.]

We see examples of this meaning in the New Testament:

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. (Hb 8, 5)

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things [...]. (Hb 10, 1)

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath [days]: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [is] of Christ. (Col 2, 16-17)⁷

Gryphius also gives us the idea of futility and fleetingness when he uses *Schatten* :

⁷ These three biblical passages refer to the King James Version.



*Ab! Was ist alles dis was wir vor köstlich achten/
Als schlechte nichtkeit/ als schatten staub und
windt. (GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 33)*

[Ah! What is all this that we consider noble if
not bad futility, shadow, dust, and wind?]

Meer und Seefahrt (Sea and sea travel)

Frequently used in Renaissance and Baroque literature, nautical metaphors (*Schiff* [ship], *Sturm* [storm], *Fische* [fish], *Port* [port], *Ufer* [coast] are a tradition of classical antiquity, patristics, and allegories of medieval biblical texts, remaining for a long time. (CURTIUS, 1996)

The ship at sea, surrounded by suffering and worries, shows us the life of man in the world:

*Wie ohne Ruh'
Ein Schifflein wird bald her/ bald hin geschmissen;
So setzt uns zu
Der Sorgen Sturm/ wir werden hingerissen
Auff dises Lebens Schmerzenvollen See.
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 11)*

[So without rest, the little boat is tossed here
and there: the storm of problems attacks us,
we are dragged into the sea of pain of this
life.]

The journey through the stormy sea of life
and its arrival at the port, despite this being
death, must be seen as the destiny of the soul
in the Christian sense and will be the end of the
lamentations, sufferings, and deprivations that
life offers:

Mein oft bestürmbtes Schiff der grimmen Winde

*Der frechen Wellen Baal/ das schir die Flutt
Das vber Klip auff Klip'/ vndt **Schaum**/ vndt
Komt vor der Zeit an Port/ den meine Seele will [...]
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 61)*

[My boat was attacked several times by the
voracious game of the winds; the dance of
the waves that divide the waters, which has
passed through slopes and foam and sand,
reaches the port before time; the port that
my soul wants.]

Or even when the poet talks about his
mother's death:

*Gott Lob! Der rauhe Sturm führt durch die wüste See
Der rasend-tollen Welt/ wo immer neues Weh
Und Leid auf Angst sich Hänfft/ wo auf das harte
Der Donner/ alle Wind in Flack und Seile Fallen
Von kaum erkannter Klipp' und seicht-verdecktem
Mein Schiff (zwar vor der Zeit) doch an das liebe Land.
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 3, p. 133)*

[Praised be God! The rude storm carries us
across the raging sea of the mad-angry world,
where ever-renewed pain and suffering and fear
accumulate, where after the crash of thunder, all
the windfalls in the waves and sails before
almost imperceptible slopes and soft sands.
Covered. My boat (ahead of time, it's true)
arrives at the beloved land.]

The sea can be the image of life and the
world; the Christian allegorical image sees a
ship at sea as a representation of the Church,
says Lauretus: *Navis Quandoque Significant
Ecclesiam.* (JÖNS, p. 201)



*AVff! Auff! wach auff HErr Christ/ schau wie die
[Winde toben!
Wie Mast und ruder knackt/ itzt sinckt dein Schiff zu
[grund
Itzt schaumt die wilde Flutt wo Flack und Segel stund
Vns fehlts an Stärck und Raths! Bald kracht die Lufft
[von oben [...]
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 194)*

[Let's go! Let's go! Wake up, Christ Lord, see how the winds roar! As the mast and the oar creak, your boat sinks; now the waters foam where there were once sails and ropes! We lack strength and advice! Soon, the air from above will burst (...).]

There is vast material in the Bible that brings us to this topic:

Then he got into the boat followed by his disciples. Suddenly a storm broke over the lake, so violent that the boat was being swamped by the waves. But he was asleep. (Mt 8, 23-24)

Into the sea go all the rivers, and yet the sea is never filled, and still to their goal the rivers go. (Eccl 1,7)

Brunnen und Quelle (well and source)

Such images, recurrent in biblical language, belong to the Hebrew-Christian marvelous and refer to the essence, the grace of God. As they are precious goods, a source of life, especially in a desert region, they fit perfectly to designate grace and divinity, as the following examples demonstrate:

[...] in you is the source of life; by your light we see the light. (Ps 36, 9)

For my people have committed two crimes: they have abandoned me, the fountain of living water, and dug water tanks for themselves, cracked water tanks that hold no water. (Jer 2, 13)

Why, Israel, why are you in the country of your enemies, growing older and older in an alien land, defiling yourselves with the dead, reckoned with those who go to Sheol? It is because you have forsaken the fountain of wisdom! (Bc 3, 10-12)

Gryphius also transmits these images to us in his poetic work:

*Quell der Lieb und Lebens!
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 107)*

[O source of love and life!]

*Wahrer Liebe Fehr! Brunn aller gutten Gaben!
[...]
O wesentliches Liecht! O tenre Gnaden-Quell
Die du den zarten Leib Mariens hast befeuchtet .
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 5)*

[O fire of true love! Source of all blessings! O essential light! O dear source of forgiveness who fertilized Mary's fragile body]

Tiere (animals)

About animals, we find, in Gryphius' lyric, a more spiritualized interpretation. We have the examples of the silkworm and the caged bird, both of which have an allegorical connotation.



(JÖNS, 1966) The former has been used as an allegory since Basil, representing death and resurrection through its metamorphosis. This means the imprisonment of the soul by the body.

Furthermore, the silkworm, by covering itself with its thread, prepares for its death, being also a symbol of the miser and, at the same time, a prototype of *homo mundanus*:

*Die können nichts als Rauch/ und Ruhm ohn
[Ruhm erwerben
Vnd müssen endlich schnell mit ihrem Schatz
[verderben
Gleich als ein Seiden Wurm/ an dem verdorrtten Ast
Sich selbst in Faden spinnt; und sich mit sich
[umbfast [...]
(JÖNS, 1966, p. 219)*

[They can acquire nothing but smoke and fame without fame and must soon ruin their treasure as a silkworm, on the withered branch, weaves itself into threads and becomes entangled with itself.]

The silkworm does not symbolize the man who works for his ruin. Still, it signifies the futility of all human effort and capacity, which only concerns itself with accumulating treasures on earth. Gryphius will address this theme in his ode *Vanitas Mundi*:

*Das kleine Thier
Das seiden spinnt/ verstrickt sich in seinen
[spinnen.
So müßn wir
Durch unsern fleis/ oft unsern todt gewidmen.
Viel hat verstand/ undt was uns weise macht;
In's Grab gebracht.
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 10)*

[The little silk-weaving creature becomes entangled in its weaving. Thus, through our efforts, we must often dedicate ourselves to our death; Many were led by reason and by what makes us wise to the grave.]

Gryphius also reminds us of the caged bird, whose image has been used since the second half of the 15th century in painting, as well as in religious iconography:

*Ein Vogel der verschrencket/ Im festen Käfig
steckt iemehr Begier ihn lencket/
Nachdem/ was Freyheit beißt: Je härter kommts
ihn an/
Wenn er sein enges Hauß gantz nicht erbrechen kan.
(JÖNS, 1966, p. 223)*

[A bird trapped in a cage is driven by a desire for what is called freedom; the harder it is for him when he cannot break his cramped home]

The other animals used by Gryphius are not considered allegories but metaphorical representations, such as the lamb (*Lamm*), the lion (*Löwe*), and the dove (*Taube*). The lamb and the sun are the best-known iconography of Christ. John the Baptist is the one who first attributes the concept to Jesus:

Look, there is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. (Jo 1, 29)

[...] but in precious blood as of a blameless and spotless lamb, Christ. (1Pt 1,19)



Gryphius uses the image of the lamb in the following ode:

*Wonne! Wonne über Wonne!
Gottes Lamb ist unser Sonne;
Freude/ Freud' ohn alles Leiden!
Niemand kan von Gott uns Scheiden.*
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 90)

[Rejoice! Rejoicing upon rejoicing! The lamb of God is our sun; joy, joy without suffering! No one can separate from God.]

However, the lamb is not the only metaphor for Christ; we also have that of the lion, the conqueror of death, and the devil:

[...] the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed [...]. (Rev 5, 5)

[...] the lion, bravest of beasts, he will draw back from nothing [...]. (Pv 30,30)

The lion is representative, as it can mean both Christ and the devil. For Horapolo (2011), the lion represents:

a) The courage:

When they want to express “courage,” they paint a lion because this animal has a large head, pupils like fire, a round face, and hair similar to rays in imitation of the sun.

⁸ Cuando quieren expresar “coraje”, pintan un león; pues este animal tiene la cabeza grande, las pupilas como de fuego, la cara redonda y en torno a ella cabellos semejantes a rayos como imitación del sol.

⁹ (...) fue llamado de los Griegos León, o porque significa Rey, o porque el león tiene perfectísima vista, y leo significa ver. Es este

(HORAPOLO, 2011, p. 103, free translation)⁸

b) Physical strength and royalty:

[...] The Greeks called him Leon either because it means king or because the lion has perfect sight, and leo means to see... He is this Prince and King of the animals, both for its lightness and strength and for its ferocity and nobility, and thus, it has commonly been a symbol or hieroglyph of Kings. (HORAPOLO, 2011, p. 105, free translation)⁹

c) Surveillance:

Without a doubt, this association of the lion with vigilance was related to the divine nature of Christ, who, as a lion, passed through the tomb without being altered. (HORAPOLO, 2011, p. 107, free translation)¹⁰

d) Temerity:

The sense of strength that produces fear is already evident in the classics [...] through an engraving from the 16th century [...]. Here, the animal appears as the most powerful, the king of animals, and is associated with the image of Christ as the triumphant spiritual lion of the tribe of Judah [...]. (HORAPOLO, 2011, p. 110-111)

Príncipe y Rey de los animales; así por ligereza y fuerza, como por su ferocidad y nobleza, y así comúnmente ha sido símbolo o jeroglífico de los Reyes.

¹⁰ Sin duda esta asociación del león con la vigilancia se relacionó con la naturaleza divina de Cristo, quien a modo de león, pasó por el sepulcro sin alterarse.



Gryphius will use these metaphors in the following:

Wo ist der Höllen Raub? Wo sind deß Todes
[Pfeyle?
Wo ist der Sünden Macht? Wo ist der Schlangen
[Zahn?
Wo ist de böchsten Zorn? Wo ist der Höllen
[Kabn?
Verjagt! Erlegt! entzwey! Wo sind die starcken Seile

Mit den die Sünde band? Ist in so kurzer weile
Deß Teufels Reich zerstört? Already! Schaut die
[Sieges Fahn
Der Löw und Lamb/ der Knecht und König hats
[gethan:
O Leben! Heil! Triumph! auff/ auff mein Herz und
[eile!
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v. 1, p. 202)

[Where is the booty of hell? Where are the spears of death? Where is the power of sins? Where is the serpent's tooth? Where is the wrath of the Most High? Where is the hell boat? Scared away! Dead! Destroyed! Where are the strong strings. That bound sin: could it be that the Demon's kingdom was destroyed in such a short time? Yes! See the flag of victory of the lion and the lamb; the servant and the king made it. The life! Alive! Triumph! Go and run my heart!]

Gryphius shows us that Christ can be both *Lamb*, meek, tender, and sweet, and *Löw*, fierce, vigilant, and fearsome, ready to defend souls in danger, destroying Satan's kingdom. However, as Horapolo (2011) had said, the lion can also be "the personification of Satan, who tries to kill the good" (HORAPOLO, 2011, p. 110-

111), which we can see in the First Letter of Saint Peter:

Keep sober and alert, because your enemy the devil is on the prowl like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. (1Pt 5,8)

Gryphius also uses this metaphor:

Mensch wach/ und nim dich in acht!
Weil Sathan umb dich Tag und Nacht
Im Irrgang dieser Wel
Als ein heiß-ergrimter Lew
Als ein Mörder ohne scheu
Manch si're Seel' anfällt' [...].
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 108)

[Alert, man! And be careful! Because Satan attacks you day and night in the intricacies of this life like a fierce lion, like a shameless killer who attacks many firm souls.]

Gib nicht/ was du hast müssen sau'r erwerben
Dem Tier zur Beutt? Hilf daß mich nicht verzehr
Der grimme Löw. Vertreib den Höllen Beer
Und laß mich Platz in deinem Stall erben.
(GRYPHIUS, 1963, v.1, p. 203)

[Do not give away what you have achieved with hard toil to the animal as prey. Please help me so the lion doesn't eat me. Scare away the bear from hell, and let me inherit a place in your stable.]

Also present in Christian imagery is the dove, which is the symbol of the Holy Spirit:

And John declared, 'I saw the Spirit come down on him like a dove from heaven and rest on him [Jesus]. (Jo 1,32)



Despite that, it was already present in the Old Testament:

After waiting seven more days, he again released the dove from the ark. (Gen 8, 10)

When the period of her purification is over, for either boy or girl, she will bring the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting a lamb one-year-old for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or turtledove as a sacrifice for sin. (Lev 12,6)

Wind (wind)

There is another representation of *vanitas* here:

*Was ist die Welt
Die mich bis her mit jhrer pracht bethöret?
Wie plötzlich felt
Was Alt und Jung/ und Reich und Arm geebret!
Was ist doch alles was man allbir findt?
Ein leichter Wind!*
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v. 2, p. 10)

[What is the world that so far ensnares me with its beauty? How quickly what has been praised by young and old, rich and poor, is missing! How is everything we find here? Just a slight wind!]

*So werden wir verjagt gleich wie ein Rauch von
[Winden .*
(GRYPHIUS, 1964, v.1, p. 9)

[Thus, the winds will drive us away like smoke.]

For Laureatus, **wind** meant *Gloria transitoria*; for Alanus de Insulis, from *fluxus vitae humanoe* through *transitoriae vitae prosperitas* to *res transitoria*. (JÖNS, 1966, p. 241)

We can find the same idea in the Old Testament:

Terror rounds on me, my confidence is dispersed as though by the wind, my hope of safety vanishes like a cloud. (Job 30, 15)

[...] remembering they were creatures of flesh, a breath of wind that passes, never to return. (Ps 78, 39)

Final considerations

Gryphius, like artists inserted in the social context of the 17th century, will not only be immersed in a sea of images and topics but also make extensive use of them in his work, as demonstrated above. To do this, he used all the imagery available at the time: iconology, emblem books, and the Bible, among others. Furthermore, the poet also participates in the creative and self-affirmation process of the German language, which, in the 17th century, was dynamic and continuous as

Writers strove to personally appropriate the internal imagistic force from which the language of metaphor derives in its precision and delicacy. His point of honor was not using metaphorical phrases but rather the creation of metaphorical *words*, as if his immediate objective was inventing the words of poetry to create the words of the language. (BENJAMIN, 1984, p. 77-78)

LUMEN ET VIRTUS
REVISTA INTERDISCIPLINAR
DE CULTURA E IMAGEM

VOL. XIV N° 36 JULHO-DEZEMBRO/2023
ISSN 2177-2789



For this *metaphorization* of the language to occur, the Bible, as we have seen, played an essential role in the period, even serving as the basis for books on emblems, iconologies, and even the work of Horapolo, being extensively explored by Gryphius. There are poems of his that are accurate paraphrases of biblical texts. Saint John, for example, could even be considered a great emblemist due to the use he made of images; the example is when, in his

gospel, he calls the Son of God *λόγος/Verbum* (Jo 1,1-5), or even in the various images created in the Apocalypse.

We saw from this that it becomes challenging to read texts from the period if we do not have access to the concepts they used, which can lead us to formulate a mistaken, disconnected, and distant interpretation of what the poet proposed and, as a result, perpetuate prejudices.



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